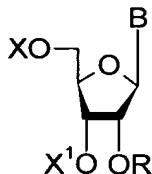


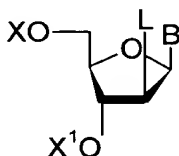
Amendments to the Abstract of the Disclosure:

Please replace the Abstract of the Disclosure with the following amended Abstract:

A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (1):



is provided, which comprises the reaction a compound of formula (2):



with a compound of formula $\text{Al}(\text{OR})_3$ wherein ~~R is as defined above~~ under substantially anhydrous conditions. X, and ~~X²~~ X¹ are each independently H or a protecting group, B is a base; R is an alkyl, alkoxyalkyl, alkenyl, or alkynyl group, each of which may be optionally substituted, and L is a leaving group.